

REMARKS

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-38 are elected and independent claim 39 is withdrawn.

Claims 1-12 and 28-38 are allowed.

Claims 13, 14, 20, 26, and 27 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Kihara (US Patent No. 5,493,558).

Dependent claims 15-19, and 21-25 are objected to as being allowable if amended into independent form.

Rejected claims 13-27 are cancelled without disclaimer or prejudice, and may be filed in a US continuation type application for further examination by the USPTO.

Allowed claims 36-38 are also cancelled without disclaimer or prejudice, and may be filed in a US continuation type application for further examination by the USPTO.

Non-elected (withdrawn) claim 39 is canceled without disclaimer or prejudice, and may be filed in a US divisional type application for further examination by the USPTO.

Therefore, allowed claims 1-12 and 28-35 remain pending, and, thus, the application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

No new matter has been added in this Amendment.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,
STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: March 3, 2004

By: 
Mehdi Sheikerz
Registration No. 41,307

1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501